

Message Text

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SUBJ: FACTIONALISM IN MEETINGS OF ISTANBUL JUSTICE

(JP) AND REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) ORGANIZATIONS

REF: (A) ISTANBUL 2789 (B) ISTANBUL 2711

SUMMARY: JUSTICE PARTY (JP) PROVINCIAL CONGRESS PREPARATIONS MARKED BY CLASHES BETWEEN PRO/ANTI-DEMIREL FACTIONS; LOCAL REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) LEADER POLITICAL CASUALTY OF RPP INFIGHTING. END SUMMARY

1. OCTOBER 13 MEETINGS OF LOCAL JUSTICE PARTY (JP) AND REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) GAVE FURTHER EVIDENCE OF GROWING FACTIONALISM WITHIN EACH PARTY'S ISTANBUL ORGANIZATION. AT JUSTICE PARTY PROVINCIAL CONGRESS INCUMBENT CHAIRMAN NUMAN UZUN WAS RE-ELECTED TO LEADERSHIP POSITION, CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS MANY WELL-PLACED JP OBSERVERS. UZUN DEFEATED PRIME CONTENDER ORHAN CEMAL FERSON (REFTEL A) BY VOTE OF 300 TO 270. ALTHOUGH FERSON WAS BETTER KNOWN AND MORE DYNAMIC CANDIDATE UZUN IS PARTY WORKHORSE COMPLETELY LOYAL TO DEMIREL. UZUN'S VICTORY SUGGESTS DEMIREL USED INFLUENCE

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TO ASSURE THAT A COMPLETELY TRUSTWORTHY "DEMIREL MAN" IS

AT HEAD OF PARTY'S MOST IMPORTANT PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION.

2. DEMIREL'S VISIT TO ISTANBUL, HOWEVER, MARRED BY HECKLERS AT AIRPORT AND ENSUING VIOLENCE BETWEEN SUPPORTERS, OPPONENTS AND POLICE. A GROUP CARRYING PLACARDS IDENTIFYING THEM AS MEMBERS OF JP'S SO-CALLED "RENEWAL MOVEMENT" CALLING FOR DEMIREL'S RESIGNATION CLASHED WITH DEMIREL'S SUPPORTERS. WHILE DEMIREL OPPONENTS NOT IDENTIFIED WITH ANY INDIVIDUAL, NEWSPAPERS CLAIM LINK WITH "COMMANDOS" OF JP CANAKKALE PARLIAMENTARIAN MURAT BAYRAK, WHO HAS BEEN CRITICIZING DEMIREL'S LEADERSHIP. (REF B).

3. ON REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) SIDE, GROWING CONFLICT BETWEEN "DEMOCRATIC LEFT" (DEMOKRATIK SOL) SUPPORTERS OF RPP GENERAL SECRETARY EYUBOGLU AND THE "LEFT OF CENTER" (ORTA SOL) GROUP LINKED WITH THE EXTREME LEFT WING OF THE PARTY HAS BECOME MARKED IN RECENT DAYS. CLASHES BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH FACTIONS HAVE RESULTED IN THE POSTPONEMENT OF LOCAL (MAHALLI) DISTRICT ELECTIONS FOR DELEGATES TO RPP PROVINCIAL CONGRESS IN AT LEAST NINE DISTRICTS. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TWO FACTIONS HAVE GROWN SERIOUS ENOUGH THAT RPP YOUTH BRANCH PRESIDENT SUHA AKINCI WARNED EYUB DISTRICT YOUTH BRANCH MEETING THAT FACTIONALISM IS HARMING PARTY. MAJOR LOSER IN DISTRICT ELECTIONS WAS RPP ISTANBUL PROVINCIAL CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY MAYOR AYTEKIN KOTIL, WHO WAS DEFEATED IN HIS BID TO BE PARTY CONGRESS DELEGATE. GIVEN KOTIL'S POSITION AS A MAN PERSONALLY PICKED BY ECEVIT, HIS LOSS ADDS NEW ELEMENT TO INTRA-PARTY STRIFE, WHICH ULTIMATELY MAY REQUIRE ECEVIT TO INTERVENE DECISIVELY IN DISPUTE.

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